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Agenda item 116

# Human rights questions

## Report of the Third Committee*

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## I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 17 September 1999, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled:

"Human rights questions:

"(a) Implementation of human rights instruments;

"(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

"(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives;

"(d) Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action;

"(e) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights"

and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

**Item 116. Human rights questions**

Relevant sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1999[1]

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in six parts, under the symbol A/54/605 and Add.1-5.

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/54/3).

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Letter dated 29 December 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of Belarus and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/56)

Letter dated 12 February 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the execution of Sean Sellers, issued on 11 February 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/65)

Letter dated 14 April 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Ashgabat Declaration adopted on 9 April 1999 (A/54/80)

Letter dated 29 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement issued on 26 April 1999 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (A/54/91)

Letter dated 17 May 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the Twenty-first Century, adopted by the Appeal for Peace Conference, held at The Hague from 12 to 15 May 1999 (A/51/98)

Letter dated 19 May 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting, *inter alia*, the Budapest Declaration and the Declaration on the Kosovo Crisis, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 7 May 1999 (A/54/99)

Letter dated 5 May 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/114)

Letter dated 3 September 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/314-S/1999/942)

Letter dated 17 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/368-S/1999/993)

Letter dated 29 September 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of Brazil, Finland and Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Declaration of Rio de Janeiro and the priorities for action adopted during the first summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held at Rio de Janeiro on 28 and 29 June 1999 (A/54/448)

Letter dated 15 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New York on 23 September 1999 (A/54/469-S/1999/1063)

Letter dated 15 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/473)

Letter dated 22 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/489-S/1999/1084)

Note verbale dated 28 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/516-S/1999/1105)

**Item 116 (a). Implementation of human rights instruments**

Relevant sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1999[1]

Report of the Human Rights Committee[2]

Report of the Committee against Torture[3]

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (A/54/177)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (A/54/189)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/54/277 and Corr.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (A/54/346)

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (A/54/348)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (A/54/426)

Letter dated 27 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/C.3/54/5)

**Item 116 (b). Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms**

Report of the Secretary-General on strengthening United Nations action in the field of human rights through the promotion of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity (A/54/216)

Report of the Secretary-General on human rights and unilateral coercive measures (A/54/222 and Add.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (A/54/303)

Report of the Secretary-General on the right to development (A/54/319)

Report of the Secretary-General on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (A/54/336)

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Cambodia (A/54/353)

Report of the Secretary-General on human rights and mass exoduses (A/54/360)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, and public information activities in the field of human rights (A/54/399 and Add.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on human rights and terrorism (A/54/439)

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[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 40* (A/54/40), vols. I and II.

[3] Ibid., *Supplement No. 44* (A/54/44).

Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections (A/54/491)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting resolution 290/40, entitled "International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition" adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its twenty-ninth session (A/54/137)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief (A/54/386)

Note by the Secretary-General on the report of the independent expert on the right to development (A/54/401)

Letter dated 5 May 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, transmitting a statement on the death penalty in Uganda, issued on 4 May 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/93).

**Item 116 (c). Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives**

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/54/499)

Note by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in southern Lebanon and west Bekaa (A/54/188)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Rwanda (A/54/359)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/54/361)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (A/54/365)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the independent expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti (A/54/366)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the periodic report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (A/54/396-S/1999/1000 and A/54/396/Add.1-S/1999/1000/Add.1)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons (A/54/409)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan (A/54/422)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/54/440)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq (A/54/466)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Sudan (A/54/467)

Letter dated 31 August 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the recent killings of civilians in Burundi, issued on 27 August 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/302)

Letter dated 8 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the killings of civilians in Burundi, issued on 3 September 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/330-S/1999/958)

Letter dated 8 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, issued on 3 September 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/331-S/1999/959)

Letter dated 21 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/387)

Letter dated 12 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the forced removals of civilians in Burundi, issued on 8 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/465-S/1999/1060)

Letter dated 18 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, issued on 11 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/482-S/1999/1076)

Letter dated 20 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the killing of members of a humanitarian mission in Burundi, issued on 18 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/493-S/1999/1085)

Letter dated 2 November 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the extension of the ceasefire in the Sudan, issued on 21 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/54/527-S/1999/1125)

Letter dated 15 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/54/4)

Letter dated 1 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, issued on 22 September 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/C.3/54/8)

Letter dated 1 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a statement on East and West Timor, issued on 21 September 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the Union (A/C.3/54/9)

Letter dated 9 November 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.3/54/10)

**Item 116 (d). Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action**

There were no documents before the Committee under sub-item (d).

**Item 116 (e). Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights[4]

## II. Consideration of a draft decision proposed by the Chairman

3. At its 56th meeting, on 22 November, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of human rights (see para. 4).

## III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

4. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

### Documents considered by the General Assembly in connection with the question of human rights

The General Assembly takes note of the following reports:

(a) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;[4]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on human rights and unilateral coercive measures (A/54/222 and Add.1).

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[4] Ibid. *Supplement No. 36* (A/54/36).